

**Meeting of the Cabinet - 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

**Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services**

**'Fit for the Future – Homes for Life' – Dudley's Housing Strategy for Older People**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the strategy in relation to the provision of older peoples' housing. The strategy complements Dudley's Older Peoples' Strategy and contains supplementary information on housing needs, aspirations and actions.

**Background**

2. This is the first strategy that Dudley has specifically produced to acknowledge and plan for the needs of older people within the Borough. Dudley MBC's population projections (based on 2001 Census data) predict that by 2021 there will be 3,900 more people aged 45-64 and 13,900 more people aged 65+. This includes the 80+ age group which will increase by 5,700 people.
3. In February 2008 the Government published its national strategy for housing in an ageing society called 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods.' The key strategic drivers include increasing the number of overall homes that are available for occupation, ensuring that new homes are 'future proofed', and are easily adaptable to meet the needs of people as they become older, and that housing, health and social care services are co-ordinated to better meet the needs of older people.
4. Dudley's strategy incorporates the key drivers that are outlined in the national strategy but also responds to the key consultation messages that have emerged during a series of local consultation events. Key local feedback messages were:
  - Increasing the range of housing choices that are available, ranging from help to stay in their existing home to providing new Extra Care housing schemes
  - Providing a range of mixed tenure options
  - Specifying a minimum of two bedrooms in any new properties that are built.
  - Increasing advice and information about 'staying put' for older owner occupiers including increasing handy person services
  - Reviewing Dudley MBC's sheltered housing stock and services to ensure that they will meet the aspirations of older people in the future.
5. Local people were consulted as part of the development of this strategy including:
  - Housing Themed Action Group (sub group of the Older Peoples' Strategy)
  - Age Concern Dudley
  - Dudley MBC Housing Conference workshop delegates

- Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Consultation event
- A range of stakeholders including the Primary Care Trust, local housing associations (via Dudley Housing Partnership) and voluntary sector organisations including Action for Disabled People and Carers and Dudley Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations.

A variety of consultation methods were used including: listening events, workshops and site visits.

### **Finance**

6. In order to meet the growing needs and aspirations of the older population a range of funding sources will be utilised. These include utilising existing council budgets, working with Registered Social Landlords, the Department of Health and the Homes and Communities Agency.

### **Law**

7. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions

Section 2 of the Local Government Act, 2000, enables the Council to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of the borough

The powers and duties of housing authorities in relation to the allocation and management of Council housing are set out in the Housing Acts 1985 and 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002

### **Equality Impact**

8. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in consultation with a range of key officers.

### **Recommendation**

9. It is recommended that Cabinet approve Dudley's Housing Strategy for older People 'Fit for the Future – Homes for Life'



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**Director of Adult Community and Housing Services**

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## **List of Background Papers**

'Fit for the Future – Homes for Life' – Dudley's housing strategy for older people 2009:  
<http://www.dudley.gov.uk/housing/strategies--policies>